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SUBJECT: OSCE,S CORFU PROCESS COMES A BIT MORE INTO FOCUS

¶1. Summary: The OSCE,s Greek Chairmanship has assembled an outline for how it intends to proceed this autumn on a comprehensive review of European security, known as the Corfu process. Leading up to a possible declaration or decision at the December 1-2 Athens Ministerial the Greek chairmanship intends to convene a series of weekly informal Perm Rep meetings to look at existing commitments, conflict resolution and challenges in each of the three OSCE Dimensions ) human, economic and politico-military. A high degree of uncertainty remains about where the Greeks are going with this and what will be the actual result. End summary.

¶2. On July 31 the OSCE,s Greek Chairmanship distributed an indicative list of topics and schedule for &Corfu Meetings in the framework of the European Security Dialogue<sup>8</sup> (document CIO.GAL/98/09). Designed to provide Vienna Delegations with a clearer idea of the scope and extent of the Corfu process from September until the Athens Ministerial, the list of topics to be discussed encompasses five main themes:

- a) Common Foundations and Commitments in the OSCE Area
- b) Common Challenges of a Politico-Military Nature
- c) Conflict Resolution in the OSCE area
- d) Common Challenges in the Human Dimension
- e) Common Challenges related to the Economic and Environmental Dimension

PermReps will discuss these themes through the prism of the basic OSCE principles of comprehensive and indivisible security, existing commitments and the need for strengthened cooperation on crisis management, arms control and responses to new challenges. The aim will be to identify areas where the OSCE has failed to live up to its principles, where commitments have not been fulfilled and OSCE mechanisms and procedures that failed to perform fully or to their intended purpose.

¶3. The Greeks envision ten PermRep meetings, held weekly on most Tuesdays starting September 8 and culminating in a Reinforced PC November 24 in preparation for the Athens Ministerial. Of the ten meetings, two will be devoted to each of the three dimensions, while one will be a joint FSC-PC to review the 2009 Annual Security Review Conference and another will consider conflict resolution in the OSCE area.

¶4. The inaugural meeting September 8 will focus on implementation of norms and principles of international law in the OSCE area and will feature a presentation by Ambassador Herbert Salber, Director of the OSCE,s Conflict Prevention Center. (Note: Salber is reportedly a bit baffled by his mandate; his staff tells us the Greeks summarily informed him at the last minute of the date of the meeting and topic, but have said nothing else in terms of goals and expectations).

¶5. Although this process was established in response to an initiative last year by Russian President Medvedev, the

Russians have so far displayed a marked disinterest in the Greek plans. Greek Ambassador Marinaki told us July 28 that she had received little feedback from Russian Ambassador Azimov on the Greek plans. At an Ambassadorial-level discussion July 21, Azimov, while paying lip service to the concept of comprehensive security and to a central OSCE role in the process, restated Russia's desire to keep the dialogue focused on hard security. Subsequent informal contacts with members of the Russian delegation seem to confirm their current lack of serious intention to engage in the process.

16. Comment. While the list and principles from the Greeks is helpful, it remains unclear what the final product put before Ministers in December will actually entail. As we have repeatedly emphasized to the Greeks in Vienna, the substance must drive the process. We will need to see a critical mass of relevant issues and a workable basis for a dialogue (necessarily involving some Russian buy in) to emerge before committing to any sort of end product for Ministers to endorse in December.

NEIGHBOUR